

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in the present application.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by the Norton et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,510,411). The Examiner has relied upon the same reasons as in the previous Office Action dated October 29, 2004. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

As emphasized in the Amendment dated January 11, 1005, the interactive speech interface unit of claim 1 includes in combination an interactive controller that modifies one of the interactive sequences in an upper interactive task in accordance with a lower interactive task. Although not necessarily limited thereto and provided merely for explanatory purposes, these features may be interpreted as described on page 6, lines 24-36 of the present application with reference to Fig. 7. The upper interactive task may be interpreted as including interactive sequences PROC_001, PROC_101 and PROC_102. The lower interactive sequence may be interpreted as including interactive sequences PROC_201 and PROC_202. The interactive controller decides that one of the interactive sequences (interactive sequence PROC_101) should be modified to the interactive sequence PROC_103 in accordance with the lower interactive sequence (interactive sequences PROC_201 and PROC_202) as shown in the lower left side box of Fig. 7. Then a database subsequently stores an interactive

task including modified interactive sequence PROC_103 as shown in the right side box of Fig. 7.

In contrast, in the conventional system shown in the Norton et al. reference, the upper and lower interactive tasks are simply combined without any modification. For example, see Fig. 3A of the Norton et al. reference (simple combination of interactive tasks of "order", "drink" and "size").

In the Response to Arguments section beginning on page 2 of the current Office Action dated June 27, 2005, the Examiner has asserted that modification of upper and lower interactive tasks are disclosed in the Norton et al. reference. Applicant respectfully disagrees for the following reasons.

The Examiner has asserted that modification of upper and lower interactive tasks are disclosed in column 26, line 62 through to column 27, line 2 of the Norton et al. reference. However, this particular portion of the Norton et al. reference as relied upon by the Examiner merely describes that the Dialog Manager accepts a volunteered value (a value other than the value for which the user was prompted), and that the Dialog Manager subsequently outputs an utterance acknowledgment that this has occurred. Two cases are described whereby if the value was a filler for a role-set, the utterance consists of the new role-set's prefix, the new filler's name, and the word "okay", i.e. the sound files < prefix > - prefix, < filler-name > - name, and the _word_ okay.

Accordingly, the above noted portion of the Norton et al. reference as specifically relied upon by the Examiner shows that if the user inputs the volunteered value, the

system uses a new role-set or interactive task. The new role-set is designed in the system. That is, the interactive task as described with respect to this particular portion of the Norton et al. reference is not modified, but is merely replaced.

The Examiner has apparently further relied upon column 30, lines 30-37 of the Norton et al. reference as another example of modification of upper and lower interactive tasks. This particular portion of the Norton et al. reference as relied upon by the Examiner discloses that the Dialog Manager can handle the answer to many different questions, out of sequence. As further disclosed, although it is technically possible to predefine a traditional Dialog Manager which can respond to out-of-sequence responses, due to the number of states which must be defined to accomplish this task and the complexity of each state, it is not practical to do this for any but the most trivial applications.

Applicant however respectfully submits that this particular portion of the Norton et al. reference as specifically relied upon by the Examiner, describes that the system can respond to out-of-sequence responses. This does not specifically describe modification of an interactive task, or more particularly modifying one of interactive sequences in an upper interactive task in accordance with a lower interactive task, as featured in claim 1.

The Examiner has apparently further relied upon column 30, lines 40-50 of the Norton et al. reference as disclosing an example of modification of upper and lower interactive tasks. This particular portion of the Norton et al. reference as relied upon by

the Examiner discloses that the Dialog Manager is a flexible processor of information and a processor of information flow which can conduct interactive voice dialog to accomplish a top-level task based on a task model. As disclosed, once completed, the task can be output to a data base or other memory for later processing or storage.

Applicant respectfully submits that this particular portion of the Norton et al. reference as specifically relied upon by the Examiner merely describes a flexible processor of information. This particular portion of the Norton et al. reference does not specifically describe modification of an interactive task, or more particularly modifying one of interactive sequences in an upper interactive task in accordance with a lower interactive task, as featured in claim 1.

Applicant therefore respectfully submits that the interactive speech interface unit of claim 1 distinguishes over the Norton et al. reference as relied upon by the Examiner, and that this rejection of claims 1-6 is improper for at least these reasons. Applicant also respectfully submits that claims 2-6 distinguish over the Norton et al. reference by further reason of the features therein.

As also emphasized in the Amendment dated January 11, 2005, the Norton et al. reference as relied upon by the Examiner does not disclose modifying an interactive sequence in an upper interactive task responsive to a lower interactive task, as featured in claim 7. As emphasized above with respect to claim 1, the specific portions of the Norton et al. reference as identified in the Response to Arguments section beginning on page 2 of the current Office Action, do not disclose these features.

Applicant therefore respectfully submits that the interactive speech interface system of claim 7 distinguishes over the Norton et al. reference as relied upon by the Examiner, and that this rejection of claims 7-14 is improper for at least these reasons. Applicant also respectfully submits that claims 8-14 distinguish over the prior art as relied upon by the Examiner by further reason of the features therein.

Conclusion

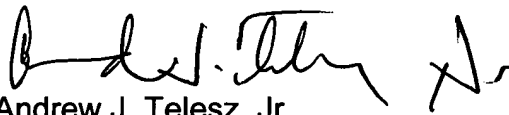
The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the corresponding rejection, and to pass the claims of the present application to issue, for at least the above reasons.

In the event that there are any outstanding matters remaining in the present application, please contact Andrew J. Telesz, Jr. (Reg. No. 33,581) at (571) 283-0720 in the Washington, D.C. area, to discuss these matters.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment for any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0238.

Respectfully submitted,

VOLENTINE FRANCOS & WHITT, P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. J. Telesz, Jr.", followed by a stylized flourish.

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